

Regional Growth Management BMPs

Climate Change

- There are climate related changes occurring or have an increase potential to occur that affect Coastal Georgia. No matter the source, coastal Georgia's communities should plan for potential impacts of sea level rise, increase frequency of storms, and more frequent extreme weather events such as droughts and freezes. There are a number of resources available on climate change and related issues. Here is a list of some:
- [EPA State and Local Climate and Energy Program](#) provides technical assistance, analytical tools, and outreach support to [state](#), [local](#), and [tribal](#) governments. Specific assistance includes:
 - Identifying and documenting cost-effective policies and initiatives that address climate change, including those that promote renewable energy, energy efficiency, and related clean technologies.
 - Measuring and evaluating the environmental, economic, and public health benefits of climate change and clean energy initiatives.
 - Offering tools, guidance, and outreach support for assessing the options and benefits of actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Fostering peer exchange opportunities for state and local officials to share information on best practices and lessons learned about innovative policies and programs
- Adaptation for climate change is the preparing for and adjusting to projected changes. Combined with mitigation measures (reduce greenhouse gases, hazard mitigation), all stakeholders, planners and scientist need to be involved to understand and prioritizing climate change and adaptation impacts on each sector of the community.

Smart Growth

- Smart Growth is the practice of planning, regulating and developing land in a efficient manner. Smart growth applies techniques of compact development, infill and redevelopment, locating uses to be accessible by a variety of transportation modes including walking and biking, and providing a variety of housing types and choices. The purpose of smart growth is to lessen land consumption, to preserve natural resources and improve livability to all citizens. Smart growth is an approach to achieving sustainability.

Sustainability

- Sustainability is a development principle of the regional plan to encourage and support development in a way that preserves, protects and enhances the natural environment that is the basis for the region's quality of life and economic development. There are a larger number of resources available that promote and provide information on sustainability and sustainable development.

- Green Buildings incorporate the principles of sustainability, designed for energy and resource efficiency, to reduce the impact on the environment, including reducing operational costs.
- [LEED](#) (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is the [US Green Building Council](#) design certification program for achieving utilizing green methods, techniques and materials. The certification program not only addresses individual buildings but includes a [LEED Neighborhood Development Certification](#).

Development Practices

- Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is the practice of locating development close to public transportation or creating sufficient population or activity in a location to support transit. Transit becomes center focal point of community/neighborhood, easily accessible, within walking distance, to shops, residences, services, and offices. TOD's contain a mix of uses. The [Center for Transit Oriented Development](#) is a resource with variety of information and documents transit oriented development and related topics including funding, best practices, affordable housing. FTA does provide funding for certain [TOD activities](#).
- Form Based Zoning governs the physical buildings style and size while allowing the market to dictate the mix of uses within the buildings.
- Incentive zoning is the practice of awarding development with bonuses, such as greater density or expedited approval, in exchange for a commitment to provide more than the minimum required to support a community goal, such as additional open space or more affordable housing units.
- Infill is the practice of developing where public infrastructure is present verses continued development beyond the existing limits of public infrastructure and services. Infill is cost effective for developers and local governments as they are not adding and having to maintain new infrastructure. Infill helps preserve agricultural and natural lands from development. It is supportive of and by Communities for a Lifetime with its focus on development occurring in and with the existing community network of infrastructure and services.
- Low Impact Development is encouraged by both the Coastal [Green Growth Guidelines](#) and the [Coastal Stormwater Supplement](#). Low Impact Development manages stormwater by designing the stormwater system to mimic natural processes and can including natural features on the site to retain as much stormwater on the site.
- Conservation Developments is a development practice of concentration development on smaller parcels while preserving a large (typically 50% or greater) area of continuous open space. Environmental benefits improve stormwater runoff reduction, better water quality, and wildlife habitat preservation. Economic benefits include high property values, reduced infrastructure cost and reduced maintenance cost. (FL Toolkit).

- Density bonus is an incentive that allows development intensity greater than permitted, additional square footage or residential units, typically in exchange for the preservation or provision of an amenity.
- Character Design Guidelines were developed for the CRC to provide recommendations to local governments on mass, form, materials, theme and design methodologies of development.
- The CRC initiated the development of the Initiative for the Protection of Significant Resources in the Coastal Georgia Region, The Protection of Significant Resources is a suite of model ordinances that include transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, and planned resource districts. The significant resources include agricultural and environment lands and cultural resources.
- Transfer of Development Rights is a program for transferring development potential of one property to another property that can accommodate additional development. Use to protect the property transferring its rights from development.
- Purchase of Development Rights is a program under the Georgia Land Conservation Act allowing local governments to participate in the acquisition of conservation easements to protect agricultural lands, environmental resources and cultural resources.
- Service delivery strategy is the sequencing the provision of public facilities, water, sewer, streets, within a jurisdiction. Commonly established in a jurisdiction's Capital Improvement Plan.
- Growth boundaries are an established limit of growth by a governmental unit separating "urban/developable land with rural not to be developed (to non rural densities). Growth boundaries are implemented through a plan, the establishment of appropriate zones, and a service delivery strategy. Acquisition, the establishment of conservation easements of the property along the no growth side of the boundary, transfer development rights program and purchase development rights program are some of the practices to support a growth boundary and avoid takings claims.
- Sensitive environments within the region are critical to the support of agriculture and aquaculture, water quality, critical habitats, and support of rare and threaten or endangered plants and animals. They are the basis for eco-tourism. Sensitive environments require measures to protect them from the impacts of the developed and developing environment. Sensitive environments include wetlands, marshes, wildlife management areas, high quality agricultural lands, forestlands, rivers, and floodplains. Development adjacent to or in sensitive environments not only has negative impacts on the environment but has negative impacts on development, such as poor soils to support foundations and septic systems, or the risk of flooding.
- Impact analysis is the evaluation of all potential impacts of a new development: traffic; stormwater, water quality, water demand, wastewater generation, solid waste, air quality and noise, schools; and fiscal to determine the costs and benefits, demands, additions and losses to a community.

- Character Areas are identified by DCA as existing or potential small distinct areas within a community. DCA's rules for local planning require the identification and planning for character areas. For additional DCA information visit [DCA's Planning for Character Areas Webpage](#).

Funding

There are a number of special funding mechanisms available to local governments to finance projects. Below are a few available:

- Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) is a taxing option available in Georgia for counties governments to establish a one (1) percent sales tax for capital improvement projects. SPLOST's are approved by voters and have a specific purpose and lifetime.
- Impact Fees are fees established to fund planned infrastructure improvements, expansions, and / or additions required to provide the capacity needed serve new development. [DCA Impact Fee Webpage](#) provides information and requirements for communities in Georgia interested in implementing an Impact Fee program.
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a financial planning tool for planning large, high priority capital projects over a period of time. CIP's are used to match cost to anticipated revenue, providing a policy framework for allocation of funding.
- Community Development Districts are independent special-purpose units of government established by state or local government at the request of a developer or landowner to finance basic services within a development.
- Fiscal Impact Analysis models are available to help local governments understand the financial feasibility of proposed capital improvements or of different growth management policies. These models estimate the difference between costs of providing services or capital projects to the community and any revenues that may be collected as a result of the investment. [Federal Reserve Fiscal Impact Tool \(FedFIT\)](#) and [Georgia Institute of Technology's WebLOGI Local Fiscal Impact Analysis](#) are two models available. Additional models may be found on the Internet.
- Special Districts are usually established as a limited or single purpose government unit that is administratively separate from the county, municipal or state governments. The Special District is established to finance and maintain services or infrastructure when local government is unwilling or unable to provide the public service or capital improvement.